
Wisconsin Forestry Notes

June 2004

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

The Crystal Lake Club in Marquette County earns recognition as Wisconsin's first Firewise community. This is a national initiative that encourages proactive measures to lower fire risks in the wildland - urban interface.

The State Forest system has received dual certification from the Forest Stewardship Council and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

The Emerald Ash Borer represents yet another potential exotic threat to Wisconsin's forests. A summer 2004 is being conducted to see if this insect pest of ash trees has reached Wisconsin.

First Firewise community in Wisconsin

Because of its efforts to reduce the vulnerability of homes and landscapes to wildfire, a Marquette County lake association has earned Firewise Communities/USA recognition from the National Firewise Communities Program. The Crystal Lake Club worked with WDNR forestry staff and the Neshkoro Fire Department to conduct a wildfire hazard assessment, develop a plan to address safety concerns, and then implement the plan. Crystal Lake Club is the first community in Wisconsin to be recognized as a Firewise Community, joining many other communities nationwide that have been recognized since the program's inception in 2002.

Firewise Communities/USA is a nationwide initiative that recognizes communities for taking action to protect people and properties from the risk of fire in the wildland-urban interface. Communities and neighborhood associations that are willing to lower their wildfire risk by implementing programs tailored to their needs should contact Jolene Ackerman, WDNR Firewise liaison, at 608-267-7677.

More information about the program is available at www.firewise.org/usa

Governor accepts certification certificates

On June 14, Governor Doyle received certificates officially conferring sustainable forestry certification for Wisconsin's State Forests in a ceremony on the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest. The documents of certification from two independent auditors (Forest Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative) certify that Wisconsin's State Forests are being managed according to accepted sustainable forest management principles.

Rainbow Flowage purchase dedicated on June 14

Governor Doyle dedicated the purchase of 10,118 acres on the Rainbow Flowage and Pickerel Lake at a June 14 ceremony. The purchase includes 5,167 acres of land and 4,951 acres of waterway. The \$7,040,000 purchase was funded by Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Funds.

Emerald Ash Borer - a new threat

Division of Forestry staff will be conducting surveys during the summer of 2004 for a new exotic threat known as the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), *Agrilus planipennis*. EAB, a native of Asia, is an insect pest of ash trees. Since its recent discovery in southeastern Michigan during 2002, it has spread to 13 Michigan counties, as well as into Ohio, Indiana and Windsor, Ontario. In Michigan, this insect has caused wide-ranging mortality, including white, green and black ash species. Wisconsin's ash population is likewise at risk to EAB infestation and mortality.

Focus of the surveys this summer will be to collect baseline data on the current health status of the ash resource in Wisconsin and to determine if EAB is in Wisconsin. Movement of EAB into Wisconsin would most likely occur by the transportation of infested wood (logs and firewood). More information about the identification and damage caused by this pest can be found at www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/pest_al/eab/emeraldashborer.pdf and www.emeraldashborer.info.

Statewide surveys are being conducted by Wisconsin DNR to determine whether this fungus-like pathogen is in Wisconsin.

Surveys to be done this year for Sudden Oak Death

A new disease called Sudden Oak Death has been killing many coastal live oak and tan oak trees in coastal California and Oregon. The causal agent of this disease is a fungus-like pathogen - *Phytophthora ramorum*. The pathogen infects not only oaks but also some nursery plants, such as rhododendron and viburnum. There is a possibility that the pathogen has already been transported to Wisconsin through infected plant materials.

This year, Wisconsin DNR is conducting two statewide surveys to detect Sudden Oak Death. One survey focuses on forests that are in close proximity to nurseries that have received host materials from California and covered with suspected host species. Bleeding cankers from oak and suspected host species showing leaf spot symptoms will be collected from plots and samples will be tested for the presence of the pathogen. The other survey focuses on obtaining baseline data of native/introduced *Phytophthora* species in Wisconsin, as well as detection effort. Soil samples will be collected to identify organisms closely related to the pathogen.

Act 228 and the Managed Forest Law

Act 228, creating major reforms in the Managed Forest Law (MFL) program, went into effect April 28th 2004. While it is too early to predict the net effect on participation in the program, early signs indicate that landowners still consider the program valuable.

Landowners who were in the application process for entry in January 2005 all received letters explaining the changes and offering them the opportunity to opt out and receive a refund (something that is normally not done). Out of a total of 3750 applications we received 232 requests for refunds.

Since the application date was changed from January 31st to July 1st in this Act, we have only had two months to receive applications for entry in 2006. Based on the number of calls received by DNR staff, landowners are taking more time to ask the right questions and evaluate whether the MFL is right for them or not.

"Wisconsin Forestry Notes" is a monthly electronic publication highlighting programs and activities of the Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry, Box 7921, Madison, Wisconsin 53707
Phone: 608-267-7494 Paul DeLong, Chief State Forester Kirsten Held, Editor

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